

gambling activity in the State of Nebraska whether it be horse racing or keno or pickles or the state lottery now, and I know we're going to be looking at a lot of expansion proposals on different gambling issues. And I guess, in my view, this is not a particularly major proposal. What will follow will be of more concern, but I do think, again, there are lots of opportunities there for gambling. One of the things I think is fundamental, and we'll be talking about it later with the other issues, is the horse racing industry and the horse tracks and trying to save the horse racing industry and the horse tracks, race tracks, and, you know, one question I have is, is that really something that is that essential for the State of Nebraska? How vital is it that we have horse racing in this state? What kind of loss is it to the economy and what price do we pay to maintain it? I think that's a question I raise now and I know this is an attempt, in a small way, to help, but the State Fair lost a lot of money on horse racing last year and if they stop the horse racing activity, they would stop losing the money and I'm not sure that it would be the end of the world. So I'm just raising questions and I know that we'll be engaging this in a great deal more debate in the future. But I look forward to the issues as we come down further into the session to address the gambling concerns that people have.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Is there any further discussion of LR 24CA? Seeing none, Senator Schellpeper, do you wish to close?

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Yes, ma'am. Members, Senator Wesely is right, there is a lot of gambling but I think when you take a look at what the other states are doing, I think that Nebraska needs to be very competitive. Senator Wesely also mentioned about State Fair Park that if we would quit racing, we would not lose money. That doesn't work that way, Senator Wesely. If we would quit racing, we would double our losses. I know it sounds funny but that's the way it works because of the...you have to switch the expenses then all to the State Fair, and in order to do that the auditor said we would lose about 800,000 out there if we would quit racing. So it's bad if you do but it's worse if you don't. So it's one of those situations. This amendment, LR 24, is just like we had last year. So I would ask for your approval. We debated it last year at length and I think that's as far as we need to go at this time. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Schellpeper. The question